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ABSTRACT

This is the fourth in a series of six monographs developed to help local educators use and report Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test results. Sharing MEAP test reports with parents gives them information on their child's basic skills and generates parent involvement and support for the school. This sharing should be addressed on two levels: (1) personal level--individual test results shared with the parent(s) of the students tested (Models A and B) by the fourth grade teachers (in elementary schools) and specific staff members (in secondary schools); and (2) school level--general test results of the school shared with all parents and the school community at large (Models C and D) by the general staff under the principal's leadership. For the personal level, Model A outlines procedures for a suggested parent/teacher conference activity, while Model B is a less desirable mailing alternative. For the school level, Model C outlines procedures for a suggested MEAP/PTA meeting, while Model D suggests procedures for a written report to parents and the total community. Planning for both levels should address parental concerns and include staff preparation, review and interpretation of the test results, developing a plan of action, and sharing a report of the findings. MEAP resource materials are included in the appendixes. (BS)

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STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!

USING AND REPORTING
TEST RESULTS

MONOGRAPH #1

REPORTING
TEST RESULTS
TO PARENTS

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MONOGRAPH #4

REPORTING TEST RESULTS TO PARENTS

Written By:
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USING AND REPORTING TEST RESULTS IS A SERIES OF SIX MONOGRAPHS, DEVELOPED AND PRODUCED BY MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM STAFF TO HELP LOCAL EDUCATORS USE AND REPORT TEST RESULTS.

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph is the fourth in a series of six. The series was prepared by staff of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) to help local educators use and report MEAP test results. The first monograph gives a general overview of how to use and report MEAP test results. The second monograph discusses using MEAP test results to identify and address individual student needs. The third suggests how to use MEAP test results to conduct curriculum and program reviews. The fifth and sixth monographs discuss reporting to the school board and to the public through the media.

The purpose of this monograph is threefold. First, to explain why MEAP test results should be reported to parents. Second, to describe materials and resources that are available to help in this effort. And, third, to provide suggestions on how sharing results with parents can be accomplished.

WHY SHOULD MEAP TEST RESULTS BE SHARED WITH PARENTS?

Most parents want to know how their child is doing in school. Is their child meeting, exceeding, or falling short of academic expectations? The mathematics and reading skills tested by MEAP are considered critical to each student's success, not only in school, but throughout life, as well. The skills identified for testing spell out one set of expectations for students and the MEAP test results give an indication of how well students are meeting those expectations. Sharing MEAP test results is an excellent way to tell parents how their child is doing in school on some important basic skills.

Most local educators want to get parents involved in or at least concerned about the academic performance of their child. Parent concern and involvement are crucial in helping students learn. Research has identified the amount of parental involvement as a key factor in improving student achievement. Parents influence their children in a number of ways: through their expectations for the children, through their own attitude towards learning, through their involvement at school, and through their direct instruction. The sharing of MEAP test results provides an opportunity for teachers, parents, and students to cooperatively plan needed learning experiences.

Past experience has shown that the public reporting of MEAP test results generates a lot of interest. Parents in particular have a personal concern. Formal presentations to the school community should be implemented through personal conferences and group meetings. However, it should be kept in mind that all parents are not reached in this manner. For whatever reason, many parents and interested community members (who support the schools financially, but who do not have children) do not visit the school. A more general summary and wider distribution is also needed. A written report of the school's test results, interpretation, and projected long-range plans should be prepared and distributed widely throughout the community.

Sharing MEAP test results directly with parents, rather than depending on the mass media to pass the word, reduces the incidence of misinterpretation. If parents receive limited or biased information, out of context, on the school's and their child's MEAP test results, the misunderstandings which can result may be difficult to correct. The importance of developing an accurate, initial school interpretation cannot be overemphasized. The test results and the "official" school interpretation should then be

shared with parents. The sharing should take place as soon as possible after the receipt of results. Sharing information on the status and progress of student performance is an excellent way to improve school public relations at the building level.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

Overview

Sharing MEAP test results with parents should be addressed on two levels. First, is the personal level. That is, sharing the test results with the parent(s) of the individual students tested. Second, is the school level. That is, sharing the test results of the school, as a whole, with all parents of the school population and the school community at large.

The planning for both levels (personal and school) should include four major activities: staff preparation, review and interpretation of the test results, developing a plan of action, and sharing a report of the findings. These activities should be viewed as connecting links in a chain. Sharing test results effectively with parents requires careful preliminary work. When the meaning of the results has not been determined and the plans for use have not been developed, it becomes difficult for the staff to report, and for the parents to understand the information. Each major activity should be planned and conducted with the intention of linking it to the next. It is critical that staff preparation, review of results, and a plan of action be completed, with the linking connections firmly in place, before sharing is attempted.

Personal Level

At the personal level, the emphasis should be placed on communicating to the parent(s) their child's test results, the implications of the results,

and a plan of action that will be taken. Each student's achievement on the assessment in terms of strengths and weaknesses in the basic skills of mathematics and reading should be presented. Sharing an individual student's MEAP test results helps give the parent(s) of the student tested a better understanding of their child's strengths and weaknesses in these areas and gives school personnel an opportunity to solicit parent involvement.

School Level

At the school level, the importance of interpretation cannot be overemphasized. School staff should: 1) reach an understanding of what MEAP results mean to them, 2) relate MEAP results to results of other school measures of achievement, 3) relate achievement results to the total school program, and 4) present an official school interpretation. Emphasis should be placed on presenting MEAP in the larger context of the total school program. The interpretation should include implications and a plan of action. Parent and community awareness of the larger school environment, the context in which testing is done, and a clear understanding of how achievement results are used should help to enlist parental and community support of the school.

WHO SHOULD SHARE MEAP TEST RESULTS WITH PARENTS?

Personal Level

In elementary schools, the responsibility of sharing the MEAP test results for individual students, with their parent(s), is most frequently that of the fourth grade teachers. In secondary schools, the responsibility should be assigned and carried out by a specific staff member, i.e., counselor, mathematics, or English teacher, etc.

School Level

At the school level, as many of the school staff as possible should be involved directly or represented (department heads, subject area coordinators, grade level representatives, etc.) in the planning and implementation of reporting MEAP test results to parents and the community. Staff should be solicited and encouraged to participate in the activities. The school principal's participation is critical. As the instructional leader of the school, the principal should play an integral part in the preparation, planning, and implementation phases of the activity.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE PROVIDED BY MEAP?

Overview

Staff of the Assessment Program have developed a variety of materials which can be used by local school building staff to share MEAP test results with parents. Some resource materials, suggested techniques, and strategies are discussed in this monograph, some can be found in the appendices, and for others a source will be noted. Some of the materials have multiple uses, this will become apparent during the discussion.

All MEAP reporting procedures require the implementation of four basic activities: 1) staff preparation; 2) reviewing the test results; 3) developing a plan of action; and 4) sharing the information. The first three activities have been described, in detail, in other monographs. The appropriate monograph is cited in the description of the relevant reporting processes. When cited, the monograph should be reviewed and the activities implemented before sharing is attempted. The processes described in this monograph will address only the fourth basic activity (sharing the information). Although each process can be outlined in a few easy steps, the implementation of each process often requires completing

several multifaceted activities. Staff preparation activities are outlined in Appendix A.

The major resource materials for sharing MEAP test results with parents are: Mongraphs #2 and #3, parent reports, and four suggested reporting processes.

The parent report is entitled A Pamphlet For Parents. It is the MEAP report designed and prepared to report, on the personal level, individual student's performance on the MEAP test specifically to his/her parent(s). It provides a summary of the student's performance on the MEAP tests in the areas of mathematics and reading. The reporting processes are called Models A, B, C, and D. Models A and B address the personal level of reporting, while models C and D address the school level. Each suggested process includes goals, materials, anticipated implementation time, participants, and a step-by-step outline of activities.

Description of Major Resource Materials

Personal Level

A Pamphlet For Parents is returned to the school principal for each student tested (grades 4, 7, and 10). Explanatory information is included in the Pamphlet to help parents understand the assessment test results information being transmitted. The Pamphlet gives a brief overview of the development of the Common Goals of Michigan Education, minimal performance objectives, and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program. It presents sample mathematics and reading objectives and test questions from each grade level and then answers questions about the Michigan Educational Assessment Program. But, more importantly, the Pamphlet provides a personal message, the individual student results, by skill area, for mathematics and reading. A sample Pamphlet is included in

Appendix B. The Department recommends this Pamphlet be distributed to parents. How this can be accomplished will be explained during the discussion of process models A and C.

Model A is a process which outlines a suggested parent/teacher conference activity. It is designed to address sharing an individual student's performance on MEAP tests with that student's parent(s). This is the most desirable method of sharing MEAP test results with parents of students tested. It is strongly recommended by the Department. The advantages of Model A are: it provides for two-way communication between the teacher and the parent(s); it personalizes the test results; and it gets parents actively involved in the educational process of their child. The only disadvantage of this model is that is reaches only a select group of parents, that is, those who are willing to attend parent/teacher conferences.

Model B is an alternative option which outlines how individual student's MEAP test results in the Pamphlet For Parents can be mailed or sent home. Although it is the least desirable method of sharing MEAP test results with parents on the personal level, it does (in some instances) provide the only available means of communicating this vital information to parents. If, for any reason, Model A cannot be implemented, Model B should be used. Something is always better than nothing whenever communicating the child's progress (or lack of it) to parents is the desired goal.

School Level

Model C is the process which outlines a suggested MEAP/PTA meeting. Model C addresses sharing school level test results with both the parent(s) of students tested and parent(s) of students not currently involved in the assessment, (but who will be, or have been).

Model C has a number of advantages. It provides parents with a clear understanding of MEAP--why the MEAP tests are given, what is tested, and how the results are reported. It will create a setting to discuss the overall instructional plan and achievement goals of the school. It provides a vehicle for putting MEAP into the larger context of the total school program. Other advantages are involvement of the entire staff and reaching parents of children at all grade levels. Use of this model should be extended to include individual contact with parents of students tested and written contact with the community at large. A disadvantage of this model is that it only reaches those parents, for whatever reason, who attend the meeting. However, the opportunity for two-way communication makes Model C the most desirable method of sharing MEAP test results with parents of the total school population.

Model D outlines a suggested procedure for sharing MEAP school level test results with the total community. It includes many of the same preparatory activities used in the other reporting models, but calls for the development of a short written report which can be sent to those parents who, for whatever reason, cannot visit the school, and to the non-parent residents of the community. Although Model D does not provide for two-way communication, nor the personal touch, it does provide a way to keep the school constituency informed.

HOW CAN MEAP TEST RESULTS BE SHARED WITH PARENTS?

Personal Level

Before Model A or Model B can be implemented, you must familiarize yourself with the MEAP program and tests, review the appropriate reports, analyze and interpret the results, set goals, and develop a plan of action. A detailed process has been developed to help you accomplish these tasks.

The process is described in Monograph #2, Identifying and Addressing Individual Student Needs--MEAP Component. By reviewing Monograph #2 and following the steps indicated, you should be fully prepared to conduct your parent/teacher conferences or send your Pamphlet For Parents home.

The MEAP materials that should prove most useful in helping you share MEAP test results with parents, on the personal level are: the parent reports, the student reports, Process Model A, the MEAP Handbook, the document entitled Understanding and Using the Individual Student Report, and the materials you have compiled in your preparation, review, and planning.

Model A can be implemented in three basic steps. First, give the parent(s) some general MEAP background information; next, share their child's MEAP test results and your interpretation; and, finally, share your plan of action and be sure to indicate your follow-up plans.

Step 1: give the parent(s) a brief overview of the MEAP program and the tests. Include in your explanation what is tested, why the test is given, and how results are reported. The information you have gathered in your preparation should be used here. There are a number of ways you can accomplish this step. It can be a brief oral presentation on a review of the background information provided on the parent report; you can also prepare a simplified MEAP fact sheet. A sample MEAP Fact Sheet can be found in Appendix C.

Step 2: share the child's test results and your interpretation of the child's performance. Give the parent(s) their child's parent pamphlet. Explain what the document says and what it means, particularly the child's specific strengths and weaknesses in the skill areas tested.

You may need to explain what a Skill Area includes and what the percentage passed means in terms of (good, average, or weak) performance.

The MEAP Handbook gives helpful descriptions of all MEAP reports. If the parent(s) desire a more detailed explanation of the problem areas, the MEAP Handbook can be used to find the wording of the complete objectives and examples of the test items used to measure the objectives.

If the parent(s) want to know the exact problem faced by the student, use the Individual Student Report to show which items measured the objectives in question and which answer the student chose. Then, examine a copy of the Student Assessment Booklet to show exactly what the student was asked to do and what answer choices were available.

A document entitled Understanding and Using the Individual Student Report (see Appendix D) is another useful sharing tool. It was developed to address the needs of secondary students, trying to analyze and interpret their Individual Student Report independently. It explains why the tests were given, what the Individual Student Report means, and how the student can use the results to identify strengths and weaknesses in the areas tested. It can also be used by staff in conferences with parents at all grade levels when an examination of the Individual Student Report is required.

The depth of the explanation and analysis conducted during the conferences will vary depending upon the needs of the child, the interest and concern of the parent(s), and your enthusiasm and concern in the information being shared. You may want to compare the child's performance with the performance of the class to give the parent(s) a frame of reference.

Step 3: share your plans to remediate the student's weaknesses. You should have a plan in written form prepared from your initial review of the results. You may want to simplify your original plan into an outline for the parent(s). Involve the parent(s) in your plan, if possible, by suggesting things the parent(s) can do at home to help. What Can I Do To Help? is a listing of general things parents can do to help their child

improve achievement in school (see Appendix E). You can provide additional tips, to help with specific unmastered skills identified by the tests. At this time, you should also indicate what follow-up will be provided to update the parent(s) on their child's progress: sending examples of work home, monthly newsletters, phone calls, future conferences, etc.

This model provides staff the opportunity to discuss with parents the child's strengths and a plan of action designed to address the identified weaknesses. It also provides teachers the opportunity to solicit parental assistance in helping their child learn the skills needed. If circumstances do not permit conferences with all parents of students tested, scheduling conferences with the parents of students with the greatest needs is suggested. An outline of Model A, Individual Parent/Teacher Conferences can be found in Appendix F.

Model B is the process which should be implemented if conferences cannot be arranged with parents of students tested. This procedure involves mailing or sending home with the student, the parent pamphlet along with an explanatory cover letter.

The cover letter should include an overview of the MEAP program, the tests, and an explanation of the parent report. The letter should also invite and encourage parent(s) to arrange a meeting with the appropriate staff member to discuss their child's MEAP test results in depth (implications, plan of action, and how the parent(s) can help).

The Pamphlet appears, at first glance, to be a general, non-personal, piece of school communication. When in fact, it is a personal report of a specific child's performance on the MEAP assessment tests. The cover letter is recommended to avert the problems which may be created by parents receiving only a printed pamphlet.

Model B can be used to encourage parental participation and open lines of communication, while reporting test results to parents in a non-personal manner. Although sending the Pamphlet For Parents home by mail or a student is the least desirable method of reporting, it is often the only avenue of communication open between school and home. An outline is provided in Appendix G, which summarizes the implementation of Model B.

School Level

Before Model C or D can be implemented, the school results must be reviewed, analyzed, and interpreted. School goals must be set and a plan of action developed. A process for implementing these activities on the school level has been developed. A step-by-step description of this process can be found in Monograph #3, Curriculum and Program Review--MEAP Component. There are six major steps in this process: 1) determine staff expectations, 2) examine performance, 3) set a school criteria level, 4) examine the current delivery system, 5) make decisions and set goals, and 6) develop a plan of action.

By examining Monograph #3 and following the steps on how to conduct a curriculum and program evaluation, you should be prepared to address the final activity, sharing the school results with parents.

The materials which should prove most useful in helping you share the MEAP test results with parents, on the school level are: Process Model C, the sample MEAP/PTA meeting script, the sample PTA Post Test, the MEAP film, and the materials developed in your preparation, review, and planning activities. The meeting should be carefully planned. The proverbial questions of why, who, what, when, where, and how, should be addressed.

Model C is a suggested process which helps you plan an agenda that makes use of the materials provided by MEAP. First, make arrangements

for the meeting. Request that your PTA or a similar group sponsor a Parent's Night. If this is not feasible, the school can host the meeting. Set a firm date, a range the place, and send out the invitations.

Next, a comprehensive, informative agenda should be planned. The meeting agenda is critical to the success of the meeting. The following suggestions and materials are recommended for inclusion in your agenda:

1. An open-ended meeting script has been developed to help formulate the agenda. The sample MEAP/PTA meeting script can be found in Appendix H. It includes examples of what should be said, by whom, when, what should be done, and how long it should take. The script will provide a general framework around which you can build your agenda.
2. The opening activity of the meeting is a very important aspect of the agenda. A twenty-item true/false awareness test has been developed for use with parents. The test is entitled A Sample PTA Post Test, and is included in Appendix I. It contains general questions regarding MEAP testing and the rights and responsibilities of the school and the parents. Administering this test to parents at the beginning of the meeting is recommended as a good activity to stimulate interest and channel the focus of attention upon MEAP.
3. The principal can actively participate in the meeting by giving, not only the welcome and introductions, but by presenting the MEAP overview.
4. The overview of MEAP should include what was tested, why the test is given and how the results are reported. The principal can set the tone of the meeting by participating and showing interest, support, and enthusiasm for the topic.

5. Other staff members who have been involved with MEAP in the past, or who teach in the grade or subject areas tested, should be included in the presentation of the test results, the implications of the results, and the plans for action.
6. The results should be presented in a simplified, uncomplicated manner (transparencies, charts, graphs, etc.). The school test results should be presented in terms of areas identified as strengths and weaknesses. This presentation should also include a comparison with the school's performance for one or two previous years. Areas of competency (which have shown improvement over a period of time) should be highlighted. Needs should be acknowledged openly.
7. The Pamphlet For Parents should be introduced and explained. Transparencies or slides could be developed to reinforce the informative and personal nature of this document. When the explanation of the Pamphlet is completed, it should be announced that, at the close of the general meeting, staff will be available for individual consultation.
8. It should be pointed out that low scores are an indication of needs, but they do not identify what caused the needs. The plans for improvement or steps that are underway to correct deficiencies should be indicated.
9. The importance of parent involvement should be addressed and emphasized at the meeting. To highlight this key factor which affects student achievement, a 12-minute color film for parents was developed and produced by the Assessment Program. It was designed to encourage parents to take an interest in their children's education and to show why their involvement is vital.

The film, "Building Better Basics: The Home School Partnership",* would fit nicely into the program at this time. It would drive home the message, in an interesting way, and give variety to the meeting.

10. The closing activity is equally as important as a good opening activity. As a closing activity, the questions to the test administered at the beginning of the meeting can be discussed and the correct response given or solicited from the group. This activity would serve as a good lead-in to a question and answer period. The test discussion and the question and answer period should serve to correct misconceptions and clarify concepts. All inquiries should be responded to in a positive, open, and honest manner.

Staff should be present (both counselors and teachers) to discuss the Pamphlet For Parents and individual student results with the parent(s) of students tested, as outlined in Model A. Other staff members should be available to discuss personal questions and concerns of parents whose child was not involved in the current testing. Parents of students tested who could not attend the meeting should have their Pamphlet For Parents mailed, as described in Model B. An outline of Model C can be found in Appendix J.

Model D is the process which should be implemented for parents who cannot arrange to attend the MEAP/PTA meeting, and the school community at large. The process involves mailing or sending home a MEAP School Report.

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*Order directly from your local Regional Educational Media Center (REMC).

A written document should be developed which summarizes an analysis and interpretation of the school test results. It should be as clear and concise as possible, and written in laymen's terms. The document should address the following points:

1. School results
2. An overview of the findings and recommendations
3. Factors affecting school results
4. Uses being made of the results, and
5. What the school is doing to improve achievement in areas identified as weak.

Dissemination of the summarized information should be made through a regular school district publication, one of wide circulation such as a regular school newsletter, newspaper, etc. The important thing is to communicate the results in a clear, concise, and understandable manner. Professionally printed brochures, pamphlets, or booklets are good communication vehicles, if you have the financial resources. If not, the summary should consist of a brief one or two page written account with, perhaps, graphic aids. Providing a written report of MEAP test results to the community should be just a small part of an ongoing effort to keep the community apprised of the educational progress and practices that are being implemented in the school.

An outline of Model D can be found in Appendix K.

CONCLUSION

Reporting and explaining MEAP test results to parents is essential, but not sufficient. None of the materials provided go much beyond explanations of the results. Parents are concerned with instruction schools will provide, and what, if anything, they as parents can or should do. The questions which parents frequently ask are:

How can my child get extra assistance in school?

How can I get the school to teach my child the skills he/she doesn't know?

What can I do to help?

These questions should be addressed and answers formulated before MEAP results are reported. Hopefully, the suggestions and ideas discussed in this monograph will help you to report MEAP test results to parents in a clear, concise manner.

For the sake of convenience, the suggestions on how to report test results to parents, as well as the other monograph topics, have been singled out and presented separately. However, this method of subdividing a coordinated team effort was adopted to point out the different responsibilities, goals, approaches, techniques, and procedures needed to implement a good use and reporting procedure. Effective reporting to parents is only one important part of a larger process to use and report MEAP results effectively.

Reporting MEAP Results to Parents

Staff Preparation

I. Personal Level (Assigned Staff/Individual Effort)

A. Implement the model process designed to analyze individual student performance on the MEAP tests (See Monograph #2) to:

1. Familiarize yourself with the program
   a. what is tested
   b. why it is tested
   c. how the results are reported
2. Review appropriate reports
   a. class: identify priority objectives for the class
   b. individual: highlight strengths and weaknesses for discussion with parents
3. Set goals and develop a plan of action
   a. class: develop a brief statement of instructional goals and plans
   b. individual: develop plans for needed remediation, include ways to involve parents, if possible.

B. Share Findings

1. Implement Model A
   a. give background
   b. share findings and implications
   c. share plan
2. Alternative Option--Implement Model B

II. School Level (Total Staff or MEAP Building Team)

A. implement the model process designed to conduct a curriculum and program review using MEAP tests (See Monograph #3) to:

1. Find out what should be done and who should do it
2. Find out what preplanning is needed
3. Determine staff expectations
4. Examine student performance
5. Set realistic criterion level
6. Examine the current delivery system
7. Make decisions and set goals
8. Develop a plan of action

B. Share Findings

1. Implement Model C
   a. determine sponsor
   b. set date, place and time
   c. plan agenda
   d. involve staff
   e. provide for individual follow-up
2. Alternative Option--implement Model D

This pamphlet was written to help you better understand the Michigan assessment testing program. If you still have questions about your child's test results, please ask your child's teacher, counselor or principal for help. If you would like detailed information about the testing program, please contact Michigan Assessment Program staff at (517) 373-8393. Parent interest in the testing program helps your children, your school and education in the state.

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A Pamphlet For . . .

PARENTS

On The Michigan Educational Assessment Program

Parents, citizens and educators must make decisions about schools. Accurate information is the necessary basis for good decisions. Before 1970 there was no objective, reliable information available on the status of Michigan schools. Therefore, in 1970, the Michigan State Legislature and the State Board of Education initiated the Michigan Educational Assessment Program to provide information about education in the state.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

If a family set out on a trip from Lansing to Detroit, but found themselves instead in Flint, they could not be said to have made progress, even though they may have had good gas mileage and many enjoyable experiences along the way. Progress is understood in relation to certain goals and objectives... with an understanding of where we are compared to where we wish to be. Thus, careful educational planning must begin with the identification of goals and objectives and an assessment of where we are now in relation to our goals and objectives.

GOALS

The Common Goals of Michigan Education were developed by a task force of educators, students, and citizens. The goals deal with Student Learning and the Characteristics of a Quality Educational System. Basic skills goals are defined by specific minimum performance objectives.

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APPENDIX P-1

FIGURE 6

OBJECTIVES

Educational specialists throughout the state developed and refined the minimum objectives with the cooperation of parents and local board members. At the end of this process, the State Board of Education received and approved minimum objectives in Art, Communication Skills, Foreign Language, Health, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Pre-Primary, Science, and Social Studies. These objectives have been sent to all Michigan school districts so that they may be a resource for local program development.

MINIMUM

Of course, the performance objectives do not represent a complete curriculum. They represent some minimum basic skills which children need to learn as they progress from kindergarten through 9th grade. Local school people must also design their own objectives based on the needs and abilities of the local children.

WHAT IS IN THE TEST?

The reading and mathematics tests measure minimum skills which a student should have learned by the time the tests are given. Each skill is tested with a set of 3 questions. If the student misses no more than one question in the set, the skill has been attained.

WHY DOES MY CHILD NEED TO TAKE THE TEST?

The test helps you, the teachers, and your child see the minimum mathematics and reading skills which have or have not been learned. Children in Michigan are tested in the 4th, 7th, and 10th grades. The tests act as a yearly educational health check-up on Michigan education in reading and mathematics.

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD DID WELL ON THE TEST?

If a child has passed more than 75% of the skills, the child has done "acceptably well."

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY CHILD WITH SKILLS HE/SHE DID NOT PASS?

You should discuss your child's test results with the classroom teacher or counselor. An individual program should then be developed to help your child learn the skills which were not attained. Below is a list of some practical things you can do to help your child learn the basic skills in math and reading.

- Show involvement and interest in the experiences your child has in school; such interest helps to show the importance of school.
- Express interest in your child's assignments.
- Designate a place and plan a time for study at home.
- Encourage your child to attend school regularly.
- Encourage your child to do his/her best in school.
- Ask the teacher if there are activities you could do at home to strengthen skill development.

YOUR CHILD'S TEST RESULTS, 1981-82

School: MID-CITY HIGH 9184
Name: PETER LAWRENCE Grade: 10

MATHEMATICS

Skill Area Tested	Number of Skills Tested:	Passed:
Whole Numbers	2	2
Decimals	6	4
Fractions	8	7
Ratio, Proportion & Percent	2	1
Metric Measurement	2	2
Non-Metric Measurement	3	3
Geometry	1	1
Probability & Statistics	2	2
Equations, Expressions, Graphs	2	2
TOTAL	28	24

% MATH SKILLS PASSED: 86 %

READING

Skill Area Tested	Number of Skills Tested:	Passed:
Vocabulary Meaning	5	4
Literal Comprehension	5	5
Inferential Comprehension	8	7
Critical Reading Skills	3	2
Related Study Skills	3	2
TOTAL	24	20

% READING SKILLS PASSED: 83 %

A — School / Name

B — Skill Area Tested

C — Number of Skills Tested

D — Passed

E — % MATH SKILLS PASSED

SAMPLE OBJECTIVES AND TEST ITEMS

The mathematics skill area of Whole Numbers contains some objectives that are tested at grade 4, some at grade 7, and some at grade 10. The following shows a Whole Numbers math objective and test item from each grade level. (Remember, your child sees only the test item, not the objective description.)

Grade 4 Whole Numbers Objective: Given addition problems involving a two-digit number plus a two-digit number requiring no regrouping (carrying), the learner will find the sums.

Test Item: Add: 54 + 34 =
Answer Choices: A 28 B 30 C 88 D 98

Grade 7 Whole Numbers Objective: Given a three-digit number (without zeros), the learner will subtract a two-digit number with regrouping (borrowing).

Test Item: Subtract: 815
− 94
Answer Choices: A 721 B 881 C 909 D 819

Grade 10 Whole Numbers Objective: Given a division exercise with a two-, three-, or four-digit dividend and a two-digit divisor, with or without remainder, the learner will determine the quotient.

Test Item: Find the Answer: $28\overline{)537}$
Answer Choices:
A 18 R23 B 19 R5 C 21 R9 D 181 R5

The following reading objective in the skill area of Vocabulary Meaning is tested at grades 4, 7, and 10. Note that the concept becomes increasingly difficult as reflected in the test items at the higher grades.

Reading Objective (Grades 4, 7, and 10): The student will be able to determine the meaning of a word in a sentence whose meaning has been affected by (common) prefixes.

Grade 4 Test Item:
Sometimes we **misread** words. The best meaning for the prefix **mis-** is
A well. B just. C never. D wrongly.

Grade 7 Test Item:
The **predawn** fire blazed out of control. The prefix **pre-** means
A now. B after. C during. D before.

Grade 10 Test Item:
International laws affect all nations. The prefix **inter-** means
A within. B behind. C beside. D between.

APPENDIX C

MEAP FACT SHEET

1. What is the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)?

   MEAP is a statewide education testing program.

2. Who is tested?

   All Michigan public school fourth, seventh, and tenth grade students.

3. What is tested?

   Selected basic reading and mathematics skills.

4. Why are students tested?

   To collect information on the status and progress of Michigan basic skills education.

5. When are the fourth, seventh, and tenth grade students tested?

   The fall of each year.

6. What kind of tests are used?

   Objective-reference.

7. When were the tests first given?

   The 1969-70 school year. However, the objective-referenced tests were first administered in the 1973-74 school year.

8. Where did the objectives come from?

   The objectives are statements of basic or essential skills that Michigan parents, citizens, teachers, building and district administrators, and subject area specialists identified as important for all students to have.

9. How many objectives are tested?

SUBJECT	GRADE 4	GRADE 7	GRADE 10
Reading	29	27	28
Math Core	28	28	28
Math Correlates	20	24	28

10. Have the mathematics and reading objectives ever been revised?

    Yes. The objectives had been reviewed each year, but major revisions were not initiated until 1976. Revised sets of mathematics and communication skills objectives were approved by the State Board of Education in 1980.

11. Have the tests also been revised?

    Yes. New tests, based on the revised objectives, were first administered statewide in the fall of 1980.

12. How many test questions measure an objective?

    Three.

13. How do students show they know the objectives tested?

    To demonstrate mastery of an objective, a student must answer correctly at least two of the three questions that measure the objective.

14. Who receives the results?

    Results are provided for parents, individual students, classrooms, schools, districts, and the state.

UNDERSTANDING AND USING THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORT

Michigan Educational Assessment Program

What is the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)?

MEAP is a statewide testing program. It checks to see if you know some important skills in reading and mathematics. All fourth, seventh, and tenth grade students take the assessment tests. The MEAP test results are used by teachers, counselors, administrators, and the public to determine how well the school or district is doing to teach students important basic skills.

The skills you are expected to know are called **Performance Objectives**. There are separate performance objectives for reading and mathematics. Objectives that are alike are put into groups called **Skill Areas**.

Every objective is measured by three test questions. You must answer two or three of the questions correctly to pass an objective. And, if you pass more than 75% of the objectives, you are considered to be doing acceptably well.

What does my Individual Student Report tell me?

- It compares what you should know with what you do know.
- It tells which objectives you have learned and which you have not learned.
- It tells if you are at an acceptable level in reading and mathematics.

How can I use the MEAP results?

- Write down the objectives which you did not pass.
- Talk with your teachers, parents, and counselor about your problems with these objectives.
- Ask your teachers, parents, and counselor for help to learn these objectives.
- Ask for books or worksheets which will help you.
- Decide how you will work to learn the objectives you need to know.
- Work on the objectives by yourself or maybe you can take a special course that will help you.

How do I read the report?

The example given here shows how to read your report. Large capital letters are used to help you find the important parts (sections). If you have any questions about your report, ask your teacher or counselor for help.

- Section **A** gives identification information: your name, student number, teacher, class section, district, school, and age.
- Sections **B & C** give the number and a brief description of each of the mathematics objectives tested.

- Section D gives the question numbers and tells what you did.
  - + means you answered correctly.
  - A, B, C, or D shows that you gave a wrong answer and tells which answer you did give.
  - * means you skipped the question.
  - A blank space means you stopped answering questions before you got to this question.
- Section E shows that number of questions you answered correctly for each objective.
- Section F tells if you passed each objective: "Y" means yes, "N" means no, and "O" means you didn't answer enough questions to tell.
- Section G tells the total number of objectives you passed and also gives a summary of your test results. Test results are reported at four levels called **Categories of Achievement.** Category 4 is the highest and means your test results are acceptable. In order to be in Category 4 for reading and mathematics, you must pass more than 75% of the objectives. Anything below Category 4 means you need some help. If you want to know more about the categories of achievement, please ask your teacher or counselor.

The information given in Section A-G for the mathematics objectives is then repeated for the reading objectives.

MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM 1981-82

Individual Student Report • Grade 7 • Mathematics

Student: EIGOBJ ACHIEVES
Teacher: GRADE07 OFIRST
District: CARVER COUNTY
School: WEST JR. HIGH

A

Student No: 0110559690
Section: 1
Chronological Age: 35-04

B Obj Code	C Skill Areas and Objectives	D Item Numbers and Responses			E No. Corr	F Obj Att?
	Numeration					
18-1	PLACE VALUE: FOUR DIGITS	88 +	89 +	90 B	2	Y
19-2	WRITE FOUR-DIGIT NUMERAL	1 +	2 +	3 +	3	Y
	Whole Numbers					
25-3	A + B + C: ADDEND < 7 DIGITS	91 +	92 +	93 +	3	Y
26-3	ESTIMATE SUM: 3-DIGIT ADDENDS	118 +	119 +	120 +	3	Y
32-1	ABC - DE (NO O'S), REGROUPING	163 +	164 +	165 +	3	Y
32-2	ABC - DE OR ABC - DEF	154 +	155 +	156 +	3	Y
39-1	AB x C = ?	142 +	143 +	144 C	2	Y
39-3	AB x CD = ?	145 +	146 +	147 +	3	Y
44-7	DIVISION: COMPUTATION	94 +	95 +	96 +	3	Y
45-1	DIVISION: WORD PROBLEM	148 +	149 +	150 +	3	Y
	Decimals					
63-2	PLACE VALUE	139 +	140 +	141 +	3	Y
68-5	+ OR - : COMPUTATION	130 +	131 +	132 +	3	Y
69-1A	+ AND - : WORD PROBLEM	160 +	161 +	162 +	3	Y

G Summary of Student Performance

	Core	Correlated
Objectives Attained:	28	6
Category of Achievement:	4	

MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM 1981-82

Individual Student Report • Grade 7 • Reading

Student: EIGOBJ ACHIEVES
Teacher: GRADE07 SECOND
District: CARVER COUNTY
School: WEST JR. HIGH

Student No: 0110559690
Section: 2
Chronological Age: 35-04

Obj Code	Skill Areas and Objectives	Item Numbers and Responses			No. Corr	Obj Att?
	Vocabulary Meaning					
IA	PREFIXES	4 +	5 +	6 +	3	Y
IC	MULTIPLE MEANINGS	7 +	8 +	9 +	3	Y
ID	SYNONYMS	29 +	30 +	31 +	3	Y
IE	ANTONYMS	56 +	57 +	58 +	3	Y
IF	CONTEXT	10 +	11 +	12 +	3	Y
	Literal Comprehension					
IIB	MAIN IDEA	15 +	44 +	59 +	3	Y
IIC	MAIN IDEA DETAILS	21 +	35 +	37 +	3	Y
IIE	SEQUENCE	36 +	62 +	64 +	3	Y
IIF	CAUSE/EFFECT	38 +	47 +	68 +	3	Y
IIG	LIKENESS/DIFFERENCE	17 +	46 +	61 +	3	Y
	Inferential Comprehension					
IIIA	MAIN IDEA	18 +	63 +	65 +	3	Y
IIIB	CAUSE/EFFECT	22 +	42 +	71 +	3	Y
IIIC	PROBABLE OUTCOME	32 +	33 +	34 +	3	Y

Summary of Student Performance

	Core	Positive Response/Reading
Objectives Attained:	23	4
Category of Achievement:	4	

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?†

Here are several tips which may help you to help your child:

- Try not to be overly anxious about test scores. Too much emphasis on test scores can be upsetting to children.
- Give your child encouragement. Praise him/her for the things (s)he does well. A child who feels good about him/herself will do his/her best. A child who is afraid of failing is more likely to make a mistake.
- Don't judge your child on the basis of a test score. Test scores are not perfect measures of what your child can do. There are many other things that might influence a test score; how the child is feeling, the setting in the classroom, and the attitude of the teacher are just a few. Remember also that any one test tells only part of the story.
- Meet with your child's teacher as often as possible to discuss your child's progress. Parents and teachers should work together to benefit the child.
- Ask the teacher to suggest activities for you to do with your child at home that will help your child prepare for tests and improve his/her understanding of school work.
- Make sure your child attends school regularly. Remember that tests reflect the overall achievement of your child. The more often your child is in a learning situation, the more likely (s)he will do well on tests.
- Make sure your child completes his/her assigned homework. Homework is an important way that teachers help students learn. Try to provide a comfortable and quiet working environment for the child at home.
- Make sure your child is well rested on school days and especially on the day of a test. Children who are tired are less able to pay attention in class or to handle the demands of a test.
- See that your child has a well-rounded diet. A healthy body leads to a healthy, active mind. Most schools provide free breakfast and lunch for students who qualify. For information, you should contact the principal at your child's school.
- Provide a variety of books and magazines for your child to read at home. Through reading new materials, your child will learn new words (s)he might see on a test.

Additionally, you should know the policies and practices of your school system that affect testing and the use of test scores:

- Find out which tests your child will take and for what purposes. The school principal or counselor should provide you with a schedule of testing for the year and explain the use of the tests. Contact your school board to find out about tests that may be required by the state.
- Find out whether your school system has prepared the staff to understand testing. School personnel must be trained in order to understand and use test information properly.
- Find out whether your child's school gives students practice in taking tests. Are practice exercises used to make sure students are familiar with directions and test format? Such practice is part of good test administration.

†Your Child and Testing, The National Institute of Education Washington, D.C. 20208

APPENDIX F

Reporting MEAP Results to Parents
(Personal Level)
Model A
Individual Parent/Teacher Conferences

Goals:
1. To provide the parent(s) with a better understanding of their child's strengths and weaknesses in the basic skills of reading and mathematics.
2. To provide the parent(s) with a "Plan of Action" designed to address the identified weaknesses.
3. To solicit the assistance of the parent(s) in helping their child learn the skills needed.

Materials:
1. Monograph #2: Identifying and Addressing Individual Student Needs--MEAP Component
2. Individualized Parent Pamphlets (a copy for each student tested)
3. Individual Student Reports
4. MEAP Handbook
5. Copies of Understanding and Using the Individual Student Report
6. Information compiled in the preparation, review, and planning, i.e.:
   a. plan of action (class/group/individual)
   b. list of priority objectives

Time: Preparation—time will vary, depending upon number of students and extent of identified needs.

Conferences--approximately 20-30 minutes per parent.

Participants:
1. Assigned staff member (fourth grade teacher, homeroom, English, or mathematics teacher, counselor, etc.).
2. Parent(s)

Process:

I. Before the Conference

1. Complete the staff preparation activities listed in Appendix A.

II. During the Conferences

1. Give a brief overview of the MEAP test:
   a. what is tested (reading and mathematics)
   b. why the test is given
   c. how the results are reported (i.e., by specific skills/objectives)
   d. what the results mean (i.e., identification of strengths and needs)
2. Use information in the Parent Pamphlet to explain a child's specific strengths and weaknesses in skill areas tested.
3. Use MEAP Handbook to give examples of test items and objectives.
4. Use Individual Student Report, only if necessary, to further explain strengths and problems.
5. The Student Assessment Booklet and Appendix D Understanding and Using the Individual Student Report can be used for more detailed explanations.
6. Indicate plans to remediate weaknesses (involve parent(s), if possible or desirable):
   a. indicate remediation which will be provided in class.
   b. suggest a plan of action parent(s) can follow at home.
7. Indicate what follow-up will be provided to update the parent(s) on their child's progress and performance.

APPENDIX G

Reporting MEAP Results to Parents
Personal Level
Model B
Mail to the Home or Send Home With Student

Goals: 1. To provide the parent(s) with a better understanding of their child's strengths and weaknesses in the basic skills of reading and mathematics.

2. To encourage the parent(s) to come to the school to discuss their child's MEAP test results and instructional plans designed to address identified weaknesses.

3. To solicit parent involvement in helping their child learn the basic skills.

Materials: Cover Letter
Parent Pamphlet (obtain from school office)

Time: Will vary, depending upon preparation involved.

Participants: 1. Will vary depending upon dissemination source (teacher, counselor, principal, central office, etc.).

2. Parents of students tested.

Process: 1. Complete the staff preparation activities listed in Appendix .

2. Prepare a letter to accompany the Pamphlet, include the following points:

a. brief statement to introduce the Pamphlet;

b. brief summary of child's strengths and weaknesses as indicated by the test results;

c. brief statement of remediation plans;
1) to be provided by teacher in classroom; and
2) a plan of action the parent(s) can follow to assist student at home.

d. encourage parent(s) to contact school for more information.

3. Mail or send home with student, the cover letter and attached Parent Pamphlet.

APPENDIX H-1

A Sample

PTA MEETING - One Hour

5 Minutes I. Gracious greetings . Today, we are going to discuss the Michigan Educational Assessment Program which is an assessment test administered by the State of Michigan to all fourth, seventh, and tenth graders. The objectives which are tested in reading and mathematics at those three grade levels are ones which our children were expected to learn by the end of third grade, the sixth grade, or the ninth grade, as the case may be. Before we get into some of the more specific details about the program, I would like you to watch this film which has been prepared by the Michigan Department of Education for us.

15 Minutes II. Film

(A. This film is designed to show parents how they can inquire about and use the results of the assessment test.

B. Included in the film are suggestions for ways in which parents can help students in reading and mathematics.

C. The film follows a fourth grade boy and his reading problems and a seventh grade girl's mathematics discoveries. End of film.)

2 Minutes III. After the test--more to do.

As parents, and as students ourselves, we often ask questions, "How did I do?" or "How did Johnny/Sue do?" ...An interesting aspect to the state assessment program is that the very nature of the test makes follow-up activities important. As parents there is information to be gained besides the test score. We can learn about specific skill areas in which our children may need further help. For instance, in the film, , had discovered from the assessment that her child had a problem with reading comprehension. Other achievement tests may tell us that our child has a score of 14 or 86, but we do not know from that wherein the child's problems exist.

As we can see from the film, the point here is to do something about any weaknesses which are found, rather than to ask the question of how did my student do in comparison to the rest of the nation, the rest of the state, or the rest of the class. This certainly puts the responsibility on us as parents, on the students, and on the teaching staff here at _____ School. We cannot simply accept a number or a score and leave it at that. We may have further work to do.

15 Minutes IV. The School's Activities.

At this time, I would like to present _____ _____, the principal, who will explain to us some of the things that the staff will be doing upon

receipt of the assessment results, and the principal will also introduce some of the teachers, who will give us ideas on things which they may be asking us, as parents, to do upon receipt of the assessment results.

23 Minutes V. The Parent's Activities

A. Questions and Answers for staff or parent leader.

B. Thank you, principal and I know that we all will be looking forward to receiving the assessment results in November, if we have children in the fourth, seventh, or tenth grade. We also look forward to working with the teachers to assure that our children attain the skills which are necessary for their healthful and happy passage through elementary and middle school.

A Sample PTA

Post Test

Please respond to each of the following with either (T) for "true" or (F) for "false".

1. Assessment results are available for

___ 4th graders?
___ 7th graders?
___ 10th graders?
___ 12th graders?

___ 2. School districts can decide whether or not they will give the Michigan assessment tests.

___ 3. Parents or guardians have a right to know their child's test scores.

___ 4. Every citizen has a right to know the school and district scores.

5. Every student tested receives results in

___ reading
___ mathematics
___ art
___ music
___ science

___ 6. On the assessment test, the children receive scores which show how well they did in comparison to other children in the state.

___ 7. State assessment tests the total school mathematics program.

___ 8. Certain minimum reading objectives are tested by state assessment.

___ 9. The PTA and the Michigan Department of Education believe that parents and guardians should "leave education to the educators."

___ 10. State assessment tests were administered for the first time in 1978.

___ 11. The fourth grade tests show how well students have learned fourth grade skills.

___ 12. The seventh grade tests show how well students have learned grade 4-6 skills.

___ 13. The Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests all fourth and seventh graders each year.

___ 14. The information provided to parents by the MEAP test results is the same as the information provided by other achievement tests.

___ 15. Parents should play an active part in their child's education.

___ 16. Although there are many things a parent can do with the child at home, most of them require more time and skills than most parents have.

___ 17. The MEAP test results provide information on specific skill areas in reading and mathematics where a child needs additional help.

___ 18. The MEAP film is designed primarily to help teachers understand and use the assessment results.

___ 19. One of the best ways for parents to help their child is to work in the classroom as an aid several times a week.

___ 20. The Pamphlet for Parents will be received by all parents and guardians if they have children in any grade, kindergarten through grade 12.

APPENDIX J

Reporting MEAP Results to Parents
School Level
Model C
Group PTA Meeting

Goals: 1. To provide parent(s) with a clear understanding of MEAP and the current MEAP test results.

2. To discuss the overall achievement goals and instructional plan for the school and specific grade levels as they relate to the MEAP test results (and other available information, if possible).

Materials: 1. Monograph #3: Curriculum and Program Review--MEAP Component

2. Appendix F--The Sample MEAP/PTA Meeting Script

3. Appendix G--The Sample Test

4. Film (optional): "Building Better Basics--A Home School Partnership (available from your local REMC)

5. Graphs or charts showing:
   a. improvements and weaknesses in school achievement
   b. comparisons with previous year's results
   c. comparisons with state and district results
   d. format and content of Pamphlet for Parents

6. Parent Pamphlet (individual student's)
   List or priority objectives for grade levels

Preparation Time: Will vary depending upon number of staff members involved, the planners, presenters, and parents' awareness and knowledge of MEAP and the nature of the information to be communicated.

Meeting Time: Approximately 1 to 2 hours.

Participants: 1. School instructional staff (principal, teacher, support staff)

2. Parents

3. Other interested community members

Process: 1. Complete the staff preparation activities listed in Appendix A.

2. Identify a sponsor

3. Set time and date

4. Invite audience to attend

5. Plan an agenda, see example in Appendix H.

6. Develop agenda content
   a. opening, example in Appendix I.
   b. overview of MEAP test program--presented by school principal
   c. school test results--presented by school staff
      1) charts or graphs to illustrate results and implications
      2) Pamphlet For Parents transparency to illustrate format
   d. plan of action
   e. film--address and emphasize importance of parent involvement
   f. closing activities

7. Plan follow-up activities
   a. distribute Parent Pamphlet and have staff present (both counselors and teachers) to discuss individual student results with the parent(s) as outlined in Model A, Individual Parent/Teacher Conference.
   b. Have other staff present to answer general questions from parents of students not currently involved.

8. Mail Parent Pamphlet to the parent(s) who did not attend, as described in Model B.

APPENDIX K

Reporting MEAP Results to Parents
School Level
Model D

Provide School Level MEAP Test Results To The School Community At Large

Goals:
1. To provide the total school community with a clear understanding of MEAP--why the MEAP test is given, what is tested, how the results are reported, and what the school results mean.
2. To communicate the overall instructional plan and achievement goals for the school and specific grade levels as they relate to the MEAP test results (and other available information, if possible).
3. To enhance the home/school/community relationship.

Materials: Written communication from the school principal to parents and members of the community. Materials will vary, depending upon the regular dissemination practices and procedures of the specific school (i.e., an article in the weekly/monthly/quarterly newsletter, school paper, or established home/school document, letters to parents, specifically relating to MEAP test results, etc.

Time: Required to accomplish this task will vary, depending upon the extent of the content, and the sophistication and complexity of the duplicating and distribution procedures.

Participants: Initiators--MEAP School Team
Recipients--Total School Community Members

Process:
1. Complete the staff preparation activities listed in Appendix A.
2. Examine and compare the results of other school-level measures of achievement.
3. Determine what members of your community would be most interested in knowing.
4. Prepare a written report which includes the complete assessment results.
5. Adjust the emphasis, length, and content of the report to make it meaningful and clear to community members.
6. Highlight both the achievement strengths and weaknesses.
7. Include in the report interpretations, implications, and the plan of action in the context of your total school program.
8. Disseminate the report promptly to the greatest number, in the most efficient, expedient manner possible.

USING AND REPORTING TEST RESULTS

MONOGRAPH SERIES

Number	Title
1	An Overview
2	Identifying And Addressing Student Needs
3	Identifying And Addressing Curriculum Needs
4	Reporting Test Results To Parents
5	Reporting Test Results To The School Board
6	Reporting Test Results To The Public

The monographs in this series are now available upon request from MEAP, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909. Quantities are limited to one copy per item.